Explanatory Notes For the 2002-03 Academic Performance Index Growth Report

These *Explanatory Notes* are designed to assist educators and other interested parties in interpreting the *2002-03 Academic Performance Index (API) Growth Report*. The *Explanatory Notes* provide details with respect to the Academic Performance Index (API) and growth calculations beyond the explanations and footnotes that appear on the report.

The Public Schools Accountability Act
The API is the centerpiece of the statewide accountability system in California public education. The Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999 (Chapter 3, Statutes of 1999) requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to calculate APIs annually for California public schools, including charter schools, and publish school rankings based on these APIs. The PSAA also requires the establishment of a minimum five-percent annual API growth target for each school as well as an overall statewide API performance target for all schools. A school that meets API growth targets may be eligible for awards under the following programs:

- The Governor's Performance Award program
- The Certificated Staff Performance Incentive Act (Chapter 52, Statutes of 1999)

On November 9, 1999, the State Board of Education (SBE):

- Adopted a 1999 base-year API
- Defined the five-percent annual API growth target
- Established a statewide API performance target of 800

In 2003 the SBE identified the API as an additional indicator for measuring Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under Title I of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. To demonstrate progress on the API in 2003, a school must have a 2003 API (Growth) of at least 560 or make at least one point of growth from the 2002 API (Base).

API Reporting Cycle
Each annual API reporting cycle includes two reports: a base report, which appears after the first of the calendar year, and a growth report, which appears after school starts in the fall. This pair of reports is based on APIs calculated in exactly the same fashion with the same indicators but using test results from two different years. The 2002-03 API Growth Report represents the completion of the fourth API reporting cycle.

The Development of the API
The API reflects a school's performance on student assessments that are part of California's Standardized Testing and

Reporting (STAR) program plus results from the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). Except for the Stanford 9 norm-referenced assessment, the 2003 API (Growth) consists of exactly the same components as the 2002 API (Base), which was released in February 2003. The California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6) norm-referenced assessment has replaced the Stanford 9. The elements that remain the same are:

- The California English-Language Arts (ELA) Standards Test for grades two through eleven
- The California Mathematics Standards Test for grades two through eleven
- The California History/Social Science Standards Test for grades ten through eleven
- The CAHSEE for high schools

In January 2003 the SBE finalized the weights of components for the 2002 API (Base) to minimize the impact of the shift from the Stanford 9 to the CAT/6. Tables of final indicator weights are available through the Internet at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api>

The final element of the 2003 API (Growth) is a Scale Calibration Factor (SCF). The SCF is a numerical constant that is calculated by grade span and then added to each school's API according to the school's grade span. The SCF for the 2003 API (Growth) is unchanged from the 2002 API (Base). The SCF for grades two through six is 16.66, for grades seven and eight is 28.48, and for grades nine through eleven is –10.84.

The SCF may be a positive or negative number. The purpose of the SCF is to enhance the stability and interpretability of the API by ensuring that the statewide average API does not fluctuate solely as the result of adding new API components.

Mobile Students Excluded from the API
California law excludes from a school's API the scores of students who have not been continually enrolled in a school in the same school district since the preceding California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) date. This is the date in October on which local educational agencies (LEAs) submit data to the CBEDS.

It is anticipated that the definition of mobile students will change with the publication of the 2003 API (Base). This is as a result of an alignment of state law with the requirements of the NCLB. The new definition would hold schools accountable only for the performance of those students continuously enrolled in the school, not in the school district, since the preceding CBEDS date.

Inclusions/Exclusions
Besides student mobility, there are a number of other circumstances under which the CDE excludes student test results from the API. In determining when this occurs, the CDE employs the rules summarized on pages 18-21 of the *Reporting the Academic Performance Index Growth for 2002-03 Assistance Packet* which is available on the Internet at: <www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api>

Core Elements of the Report
Certain core elements appear throughout the 2002-03 Growth Report. They include:

- STAR 2003 Percent Tested
- 2003 API (Growth)
- 2002 API (Base)
- 2002-03 Growth Target
- 2002-03 Growth
- Met Growth Target
    - Schoolwide
    - Comparable Improvement (CI)
    - Both Schoolwide and CI
- Awards Eligible

STAR 2003 Percent Tested
This percentage is calculated by dividing the number of students tested, including those students who took the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA), by the number of students enrolled on the first day of testing in the grades tested. The total enrollment is adjusted by subtracting the number of students exempted from testing due to parent/guardian written request. The total enrollment on the first day of testing and the number of students tested is derived from STAR student records. The number is rounded down to the preceding whole number (e.g., 94.9=94).

2003 API (Growth)
The 2003 API (Growth) summarizes a school district's or a school's performance on the 2003 STAR and CAHSEE. The API scores are on a scale of 200 to 1000. It is based on the performance of individual pupils on the CAT/6 (all content areas) as measured through national percentile rankings (NPRs) and on the California standard tests as measured through performance levels in ELA, mathematics, and history/social science. CAHSEE results are summarized on a pass/no-pass basis.

In some instances, APIs are also calculated for student subgroups at a school in order to ascertain whether the school meets the "comparable improvement" criterion (see pages 6-7).

This 2003 API (Growth) was calculated in the same manner as the 2002 API (Base). For details on the calculation of the 2002 API (Base), please consult the following document:

- *2002 Academic Performance Index Base Report: Information Guide (February 2003)*

This document is available via the Internet at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api>

The API for school districts or schools with grade configurations that include grade spans six through seven or eight through nine is the average of the APIs for the grade configuration segments weighted by the number of pupils with valid scores in the segments. For example, for a grade seven through twelve school, the API is the weighted average of the APIs for grades seven through eight and for grades nine through eleven. This procedure is necessary because the structure of the test varies between grades seven through eight and nine through eleven.

2002 API (Base)
The 2002 API (Base) summarizes a school district's or a school's performance on the 2002 STAR and CAHSEE.

2002-03 Schoolwide Growth Target
A school's growth target is calculated by taking five percent of the distance between a school's 2002 API (Base) and the statewide

performance target of 800. For any school with a 2002 API (Base) of 781 to 799, the annual growth target is one point. Any school with an API of 800 or more must maintain an API of at least 800. School districts do not receive growth targets.

2002-03 Growth
The 2002-03 API (Growth) is calculated by subtracting the 2002 API (Base) from the 2003 API (Growth).

Met Growth Target
A school met its growth target if it:
- Met its schoolwide 2002-03 growth target, and
- All numerically significant subgroups at the school demonstrated comparable improvement

Schools meet the comparable improvement target if all numerically significant subgroups meet their API subgroup targets, which in most cases are 80 percent of the 2002-03 schoolwide growth target. For a full discussion, see the section on "Subgroups," beginning on page 6.

Awards Eligible
To be eligible for the Governor's Performance Awards (GPA) program, schools must meet the following criteria:
- The schools must meet the schoolwide five percent annual growth target
- All numerically significant ethnic and socioeconomically disadvantaged subgroups at the schools demonstrated comparable improvement.
- The schools demonstrated a minimum of five points growth.

- All numerically significant ethnic and socioeconomically disadvantaged subgroups at the schools demonstrated a minimum of four points growth.
- Elementary and middle schools had at least 95 percent participation rates in the 2003 STAR; high schools had at least 90 percent participation in the 2003 STAR.

The GPA is not funded for the 2003-2004 fiscal year.

Median 2003 API (Growth) of Similar Schools
This is the median value 2003 API (Growth) of all 100 schools in this school's 2002 similar schools group. This comparison group was based on the following characteristics:
- Pupil mobility
- Pupil ethnicity
- Pupil socioeconomic status
- Percentage of teachers who are fully credentialed
- Percentage of teachers who hold emergency credentials
- Percentage of pupils who are English language learners
- Average class size per grade level
- Whether the schools operate multitrack year-round educational programs

To derive a complete listing of these schools, along with the 2003 API (Growth), click on the link in the median score heading.

Structure of the Report
The 2002-03 API Growth Report is composed of:

1. *County and District Lists of Schools*
2. *District Reports*
3. *School Reports*

List of Schools
These lists include all public schools in a school district or county office of education for which the CDE has calculated an API. The schools are listed alphabetically by type: elementary, middle, high, small, and schools participating in the Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM). Schools with non-traditional grade configurations, e.g., seven through twelve, have been placed into a school type according to standard criteria established by the CDE. These criteria are available at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api/api0203/news.htm>

APIs for small schools, i.e., with between 11 and 99 valid STAR scores, are asterisked. APIs based on small numbers of students are less reliable and therefore should be carefully interpreted.

APIs for ASAM schools are listed to meet the federal requirements of NCLB. However, because these schools serve an alternative student population, ASAM schools have no growth targets.

Schools on the Lists without APIs
Some schools appear on the list of schools without APIs because they have had their 2003 API (Growth) invalidated. Under regulations adopted by the SBE, this may have occurred for one of several reasons:

- Adult testing irregularities in excess of 5 percent of the students have occurred at the school.
- The rate of students who have been excused from STAR testing by parent request is equal to or greater than 10 percent (schools with rates between 10 percent and 20 percent have had their APIs reevaluated through standard statistical tests to check the representativeness of the tested population).
- The school failed to test 85 percent of its students in a particular content area (either norm-referenced or standards tests).
- The school has unresolved problems with STAR demographic data.

Schools without a 2002 API (Base) and Schools with Population Changes
In order to meet federal requirements of NCLB, a 2003 API (Growth) is posted even if a school had no 2002 API (Base) or if a school had significant population changes from 2002 to 2003. However, the presentation of growth targets and actual growth would not be appropriate and, therefore, the targets and actual growth are omitted.

District Report
These reports are generated in order to comply with the state's accountability plan under NCLB. School district reports include subgroup information but not growth target information.

School Report
A *School Report* is generated for each school that has API information displayed

on the *List of Schools.* In addition to the common core elements, the *School Report* includes:

- Data on subgroups

- School demographic characteristics

Subgroups

The PSAA defines a "numerically significant ethnic or socioeconomically disadvantaged subgroup" as a subgroup "that constitutes at least 15 percent of a school's total pupil population and consists of at least 30 pupils." Also, under the law, if a subgroup, defined by ethnicity or socioeconomic disadvantage, constitutes at least 100 pupils, i.e., at least 100 pupils with valid STAR scores, that subgroup is "numerically significant" and required to demonstrate comparable improvement, even if it does not constitute 15 percent of the school population.

These numerical criteria (15 percent and 30 pupils, or 100 pupils) are calculated on the basis of the number of pupils with valid STAR scores for that subgroup.

The school is responsible for demonstrating comparable improvement only for those subgroups that are numerically significant for both the 2002 API (Base) and the 2003 API (Growth).

Ethnic/racial subgroups include:
- African American (not of Hispanic origin)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latino
- Pacific Islander
- White (not of Hispanic origin)

According to the definition adopted by the SBE, the "socioeconomically disadvantaged subgroup" consists of pupils who meet either one of two criteria:

1) Neither of the pupil's parents has received a high school diploma

OR

2) The pupil participates in the free- or reduced-price lunch program.

Information from the 2003 STAR or CAHSEE student answer document determines whether a student meets either criterion.

A pupil who is a member of the socioeconomically disadvantaged subgroup is also a member of one of the racial/ethnic subgroups. Therefore, it is possible that the total percentage of students in all numerically significant subgroups at a school may exceed 100.

By regulation, "**comparable improvement**" requires that each numerically significant subgroup must meet or exceed 80 percent of the 2002-03 schoolwide growth target.

The 2002-03 subgroup target is calculated by first multiplying the schoolwide target by .8 and then rounding the product to the nearest whole number.

There are four minor exceptions to this rule:

1. For subgroups within schools with schoolwide APIs between 790 and 799, i.e., approaching the statewide interim performance target of 800, the annual growth target is one point.

2. Regardless of the schoolwide API, subgroups already at or above 800 must continue to meet the statewide performance target of 800.

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3. In schools with 2003 APIs of 800 or more, subgroups with an API of less than 800 must make growth of at least one point.

4. In instances where 80 percent of the schoolwide target results in a subgroup target that would exceed the distance from the subgroup API to 800, the subgroup target equals the distance to 800.

School Demographic Characteristics

Along with general subgroup and schoolwide demographic data, the *School Report* includes the demographic characteristics on which the school characteristics index for the 2002 API (Base) similar schools rankings is based. The data for the percentages and rates were collected from these sources:

1. October 2002 CBEDS data collection (information on teacher credentials, multi-track year round participation, and average class size)

   • It is possible for one teacher to be in both the fully credentialed and emergency credential categories; therefore, the total of the percentages for "Fully credentialled teachers" and "Teachers with emergency credentials" may exceed 100.

   • Average class sizes were derived from the enrollment data reported on the Professional Assignment Information Form (PAIF).

   • The item "core academic courses in departmentalized programs" reflects average class size in the following subject areas: English, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and social science.

2. 2003 STAR student answer document (information on ethnic/racial distribution, parental education level, participation in free- or reduced-price lunch program, district mobility, school mobility, the number of English learners, the total number of students tested as well as the number of students excused from testing at the request of their parents)

   • School Mobility, Prior Year, is the percentage of students who have continuously enrolled in the school since the preceding school year. Currently, it is used as a background characteristic only.

   • School and District Mobility, CBEDS Date, is the percentage of students who have been continuously enrolled in the school or school district since the CBEDS date of the preceding calendar year. Students who have not been continuously enrolled in the school district since CBEDS date of the preceding calendar year are excluded from a school's API.

Some of the School Demographic Characteristics that appear on this report will be used in the formation of the similar schools comparison groups for the similar schools ranking on the 2003 API (Base) Report.

ASAM school reports do not contain all demographic data because they are not included in the calculation of similar school ranks.